

**National Marine Sanctuary Program
Advisory Council Information Bulletin
October 2003**

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS)

On September 23-24, the west coast regional maritime archaeologist based at Channel Islands, led the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary reconnaissance expedition to the tanker *Montebello*, utilizing the two-man submersible *Delta*. The *Montebello* fell victim to a torpedo fired from a Japanese submarine on December 23, 1941. It was carrying more than 3 million gallons of crude oil and all 38 men aboard survived and were rescued. The science team, working from the *Research Vessel Velero IV*, accomplished 8 successful submersible dives (7 hours on the shipwreck) to investigate and record the shipwreck, which lies 2 nautical miles south of the sanctuary's southern boundary in 880 feet of water, off of San Luis Obispo County. Upon completion of the expedition the science team met with the media to brief them on the preliminary results of the mission and the historical significance of the *Montebello* to the local community.

Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary (CBNMS)

The sanctuary completed *Delta* submersible activities at Cordell Bank and in the Gulf of the Farallones. Researchers revisited 10 sites from dives in 2002 at Cordell Bank and completed 40, 15-minute transects. Sampling sites included a variety of habitats including 250, 200, and 150-meter deep continental slope mud, 80-meter continental shelf mud, 60-meter continental shelf sand, 80-meter rock reef, and 40-meter rock reef. Seven cowcod rockfish, *Sebastes levis*, identified as a depleted species by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, were seen on one transect. The cruise involved cooperative efforts with National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and Gulf of the Farallones, and Monterey Bay national marine sanctuaries.

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS)

The FGBNMS participated in a research cruise aboard the NOAA vessel *RON BROWN* September 21 - October 3 to investigate northern Gulf of Mexico deep-sea habitats. This cruise, sponsored by NOAA's Office of Exploration, consisted of two components: occurrence and ecology of deep-water corals and associated communities in the Gulf of Mexico; and investigations of reefs and banks of the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. The cruise departed from Panama City, FL and returned to Gulfport, MS, where an open house was held on October 3rd. The first leg of the cruise focused on communities associated with the deepwater coral *Lophelia* in water depths between 430 and 900 meters. The second leg investigated reefs and banks along the continental shelf margin east of the FGBNMS in depths ranging from 40 to 300 meters.

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS)

After scouring the shores of the Monterey Bay for two years, the City of Santa Cruz and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary decided on September 27, that a new \$6 million visitor center, to showcase the unique body of water, will be built at the Fun Spot, a high-profile location across from the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf. The visitor center will attract more tourists and bring millions of dollars of added revenue.

On September 24th, Governor Gray Davis signed two bills, AB 121, and AB 906, that ban cruise ships from discharging certain wastes into all state waters, and also requested that the state's four national marine sanctuaries do the same. The two bills, which ban the discharge of sewage sludge, oily bilgewater, and hazardous waste, differ from the original bills, which would have also banned release of graywater, and both treated and untreated sewage. MBNMS will coordinate with other sites on next steps with regard to the legislation's request that California's national marine sanctuaries adopt similar prohibitions.

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS)

The United States Navy gave a presentation on the proposed expansion of the NW Range to include new operation areas and activities within OCNMS to the OCNMS Advisory Council at their regular meeting on September 26th. The Council's concerns were the lack of description of proposed activities, expansion to include beach landings within Olympic National Park and Quinault Indian reservation, significant increase in the size of the Quinault Test Range and potential additional acoustic testing. A series of public scoping meetings will be held in November.

NMSP staff met with the Makah Tribe to discuss their policy statement on MPA's, including no take reserves within the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, as well as provide a briefing on the release of the "Analysis of Remediation Alternatives for the Pacific Crossing-1 North and East Submarine Fiber Optic Cables in the Olympic Coast NMS".

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS)

The SBNMS sponsored a research cruise to video-document five historic shipwrecks in the northern reaches of the sanctuary between September 13 and 18. In partnership with the National Underseas Research Center (NURC) at the University of Connecticut (UConn) and using UConn's R/V Connecticut as a platform, the group documented the wrecks with side scan sonar and high definition TV. Discovery's Science channel also filmed for a one-hour show to be shown early in 2004. The group obtained the first detailed look at the steamer *Portland*, which sank in 1898 with a loss of all 192 passengers. This tragedy has become known as "New England's Titanic" and has great significance to the northeastern part of the country. The team also video-documented the remains of the multi-masted schooner *Louise B. Crary*, which sank in collision with the *Frank A. Palmer* in December 1902. Although the boats are quite encumbered by snagged fishing boat nets, the team was able to film the port rail of the *Crary* from stern to the tip of the still-intact bowsprit. A mid-20th century fishing boat and the remains of a 19th century coal transport were also documented.

National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP)

In partnership with the National Geographic Society, the NMSP hosted a marine science field program September 24-28 for approximately thirty teachers and students from different urban centers and/or underserved school districts for an intense, five-day educational experience of the oceanographic and cultural resources of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

Communications Branch staff met with Discovery Channel documentary leads that are interested in conducting socialization and cognitive research on great white sharks in either the Gulf of the Farallones or Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries. If the NMSP supports this research and filming expedition, there is interest in exploring a Telepresence component to their mission, which would engage teachers, students and entire classrooms from the region and potentially around the country.

NMSP staff gave a talk at a workshop on "partnerships with federal agencies" at the 2003 conference of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) in Columbus Ohio, September 7-11, 2003. The discussion was an opportunity for AZA members, which include leading aquaria and zoos from around the country, to consider partnering with the National Marine Sanctuary Program. Partnering with zoos and aquaria is part of an ongoing effort to strategically place exhibitry in facilities around the country to enhance public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the marine environment, as mandated by the National Marine Sanctuary Act. The Memorandum of Agreement between the AZA and the NMSP is currently undergoing internal DOC review.